

IN THE CLAIMS

1-75. Canceled.

76. (Currently amended)[:] An elongated guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis, and extending axially between a distal end for accessing the remote site, and a spaced apart proximal end, and comprising an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire, ~~adjacent the distal end thereof~~ the distal portion of the core wire being of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, ~~the distal portion and~~ further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, wherein the distal portion of the core wire is bent into a curved configuration in the central major plane for forming an alignment portion lying in the central major plane and extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

77. (Currently amended) [:]A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the alignment portion extends relative to the central axis at an angle in the range of 30° to 90°.

78. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the guide core wire is of a material for retaining the distal portion in the curved configuration formed by the bend[,], and preferably, the distal portion of the guide wire is of dimensions for retaining the distal portion in the curved configuration formed by the bend, and advantageously, the distal portion of the guide wire is bendable in the central minor plane thereof for facilitating bending of the distal portion with at least a part of the alignment portion bent out of the central major plane for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject, and preferably, the distal portion of the guide wire is bendable in the central minor plane thereof for facilitating bending of the distal portion with the alignment portion bent out of the central major plane for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject, and

advantageously, the distal portion of the guide wire is of material for facilitating manual bending of the distal portion in the central minor plane thereof, and preferably, the distal portion of the guide wire is dimensioned for facilitating manual bending of the distal portion in the central minor plane thereof, and advantageously, the distal portion of the guide wire is of stainless steel material.

79. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the major surfaces of the distal portion of the guide core wire converge towards the distal end.

80. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the minor surfaces of the distal portion of the guide core wire diverge towards the distal end[[],] and alternatively, the minor surfaces of the distal portion of the guide wire are parallel to each other.

81. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which a reinforcing means is provided on the distal portion of the guide core wire for minimising bending of the distal portion in the central minor plane thereof[[],] and preferably, the reinforcing means extending along at least a portion of the distal portion of the guide wire from a proximal end of the distal portion, and preferably, the reinforcing means extends along at least a part of the alignment portion, and advantageously, the reinforcing means terminates at a location spaced apart from the distal end of the alignment portion, and preferably, the reinforcing means is located to coincide substantially with the central minor plane defined by the distal portion, and advantageously, the reinforcing means comprises an elongated reinforcing member extending along one of the major surfaces of the distal portion.

82. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the guide wire comprises an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end to the distal portion, and preferably, the core wire terminates in the distal portion, and preferably[[],] the distal portion of the guide core wire is integrally formed with the core wire[[],] and advantageously, the distal portion of the guide wire is formed from the core wire, and alternatively, the distal portion of the guide wire is formed separately from the core wire, and is secured thereto, and preferably, the distal portion of the guide wire terminates in a bulbous portion at the distal end of the guide wire

~~for facilitating guiding of the guide wire through vessels of the subject without damaging the vessels, and advantageously, the bulbous portion is radiused, and preferably, the bulbous portion defines the distal end of the guide wire and defines a hemispherical distal end.~~

83. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 82 103 in which the guide wire comprises a sleeve extending from the bulbous portion in a proximal direction ~~and the core wire extends through the sleeve, and preferably, the sleeve extends along the core wire in the proximal direction beyond the distal portion of the guide core wire, and advantageously, the sleeve terminates at a location intermediate the distal portion and the proximal end of the guide wire, and preferably, one end of the sleeve is being secured to the bulbous portion of the guide wire, and the other end of the sleeve is being secured to the core wire[.]. and advantageously, the sleeve is secured to the guide wire by soldering, and preferably, the sleeve is of transverse cross section, the outer periphery of which substantially coincides with the outer periphery defined by the transverse cross section of the bulbous portion.~~

84. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 82 83 in which the distal end of the sleeve is of a radiopaque material[.], and preferably, the sleeve is of a radiopaque material, and preferably, the sleeve is selected from one or more of the following metals:

~~platinum,~~  
~~platinum alloy,~~  
~~gold,~~  
~~tantalum.~~

85. Cancel Claim 85.

86. Cancel Claim 86.

87. (Currently amended)[:] In combination a catheter for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, and an elongated guide wire, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis, and extending axially between a distal end for accessing the remote site, and a spaced apart proximal end, and

comprising an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion adjacent the distal end of the guide wire, adjacent the distal end thereof the distal portion of the core wire being of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, the distal portion and further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, characterised in that wherein the distal portion of the core wire is bent into a curved configuration in the central major plane for forming an alignment portion lying in the central major plane and extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

88. (Currently amended)[:] A method for forming an elongated guide wire for use in a surgical or other procedure for accessing a remote site in the body of a human or animal subject, the guide wire defining a longitudinally extending central axis and extending axially between a distal end for accessing the remote site and a spaced apart proximal end, the method comprising: the steps of[:] providing an elongated core wire extending from the proximal end and terminating in a distal portion of circular transverse cross-section adjacent the distal end of the guide wire,

forming the distal portion of the guide core wire to be of substantially rectangular transverse cross-section defining a pair of spaced apart major surfaces, and a pair of spaced apart minor surfaces extending between the major surfaces, the distal portion further defining a central major plane lying intermediate the major surfaces and bisecting the minor surfaces, and a central minor plane lying intermediate the minor surfaces and bisecting the major surfaces, and wherein

prior to forming the distal portion of circular transverse cross-section of the core wire to be of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section, bending the distal portion of circular transverse cross-section is bent into a curved configuration in the central major plane for forming to form an alignment portion lying in the central major plane and adjacent the distal end of the core wire extending from the bend at an angle greater than zero relative to the central axis, and

the bent distal portion of the curved configuration is then shaped to be of the substantially rectangular transverse cross-section with the alignment portion and the bend being of the

substantially rectangular transverse cross-section, and the alignment portion lying in the central major plane for facilitating guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

89. Cancel Claim 89.

90. Cancel Claim 90.

91. Cancel Claim 91.

92. Cancel Claim 92.

93. Cancel Claim 93.

94. Cancel Claim 94.

95. Cancel Claim 95.

96. (Currently amended)[:] A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the alignment portion extends relative to the central axis at an angle up to 30°.

97. Cancel Claim 97.

Please add the following new claims:

98. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is of dimensions for retaining the distal portion in the curved configuration formed by the bend.

99. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is bendable in the central minor plane thereof for facilitating bending of the distal portion with at least a part of the alignment portion bent out of the central major plane to facilitate guiding of the guide wire into a branched vessel of the subject.

100. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is

of material for facilitating manual bending of the distal portion in the central minor plane thereof.

101. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is of stainless steel material.

102. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire is formed separately from the core wire, and is secured thereto.

103. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 76 in which the distal portion of the core wire terminates in a bulbous portion at the distal end of the guide wire for facilitating guiding of the guide wire through vessels of the subject without damaging the vessels.

104. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 103 in which the bulbous portion is radiused.

105. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 103 in which the bulbous portion defines the distal end of the guide wire and defines a hemispherical distal end.

106. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 81 in which the reinforcing means extends along at least a portion of the distal portion of the core wire from a proximal end of the distal portion.

107. (New) A guide wire as claimed in Claim 81 in which the reinforcing means extends along at least a part of the alignment portion, and terminates at a location spaced apart from the distal end of the alignment portion.